

**Statement of Tina Kaidanow**  
**Nominee to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the Rank and Status**  
**of Ambassador at Large**  
**Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**December 11, 2013**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Corker, distinguished Members of this Committee, it is an honor to come before you as the President's nominee to coordinate international counterterrorism efforts at the U.S. Department of State. Working with the U.S. government counterterrorism team, the Bureau of Counterterrorism takes a leading role in developing sustained strategies to defeat terrorists abroad and in securing and coordinating the cooperation of international partners. I am deeply grateful both to President Obama and Secretary Kerry for entrusting me with this responsibility, and if confirmed, I pledge to work with all of you closely on this critical set of issues.

Unfortunately, my family is not able to be here with me today, but I do want to take a moment to acknowledge and specially thank my parents, Esther and Howard Kaidanow. Both are immigrants to this country and Holocaust survivors, and they could not be more proud that their daughter has been given the opportunity to serve the United States government through a distinguished career in the Foreign Service over these past 20 years.

As you may be aware, I most recently completed a tour as Deputy Ambassador in Kabul, where I saw first-hand the challenges that terrorism has presented to Afghanistan and its people. Countless lives have been lost – Afghan and American – because of the scourge of terrorism and the continued activity of the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, and al-Qa'ida and its affiliates. We have invested a great deal of blood and treasure in fighting this threat through a variety of means, in partnership with the Afghan government, and we will continue to work together to counter terrorism even as the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan reduces and we shift our mission to assisting the Afghan security forces and the Afghan government in taking the lead responsibility for these tasks. My time in Afghanistan – and my earlier postings in Bosnia and Kosovo, where we worked to prevent dangerous elements from gaining a foothold in vulnerable post-conflict societies – was a constant reminder of the salience of these issues and the global impact of work that we do bilaterally and regionally to counter the threat of terrorism and terrorist finance.

This hearing comes at a pivotal time. We've made progress with our strategic counterterrorism efforts, but a great deal of work remains to be done. As President Obama said in his remarks at NDU earlier this year, "our response to terrorism cannot depend on military or law enforcement alone. The use of force must be seen as part of a larger discussion we need to have about a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy – because for all the focus on the use of force, force alone cannot make us safe."

The United States has achieved remarkable success over the past decade in degrading al-Qa'ida's core leadership in Afghanistan and Pakistan. I witnessed firsthand in Kabul the enormous cooperative effort across our government, building on the extraordinary achievements of our military, intelligence, and law enforcement communities. This is at the forefront of our Embassy's efforts, supported by a huge and diverse set of U.S. agencies represented at our post.

While the core of al-Qa'ida has been weakened, however, the threat has become more geographically diverse, with much of the organization's activity devolving to its affiliates around the world, which are increasingly setting their own goals and specifying their own targets. Indeed, some of the greatest counterterrorism challenges we face today involve countering al-Qa'ida affiliates and adherents based in Yemen, Syria, Somalia and northwest Africa. As avenues previously open to these and other violent extremist organizations for receiving and sending funds have become more difficult to access, several groups have engaged in kidnapping for ransom and other criminal activities, and thus have also increased their financial independence.

Moreover, non-state actors are not our only terrorist concern. Since 2012, we have also witnessed a resurgence of activity by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' Qods Force (IRGC-QF), the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS), and Tehran's ally Hizballah. Hizballah's terrorist activity has reached a tempo unseen since the 1990s, with attacks plotted in Southeast Asia, Europe, and Africa. And Iran, Hizballah, and their Shi'a proxies are providing a broad range of critical support to the Asad regime as it continues its brutal crackdown against the Syrian people. If confirmed, I will remain firmly committed to continue working with our partners and allies to counter and disrupt terrorism and the destabilizing activities that allow extremism to take hold from where they emanate. Those who sponsor acts of terrorism will not go unaddressed and acts of terrorism will not be tolerated by the international community.

At the State Department, we have worked hard over the last several years to strengthen the civilian side of U.S. counterterrorism efforts overseas. Transforming the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism to full bureau status under the supervision of the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights in January 2012 was a welcome and important step in this direction. This transformation is still in its early stages, but having worked with the Bureau when I was in Kabul and earlier while Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, I believe it is on the right track. If confirmed, I would work to institutionalize and focus the Counterterrorism Bureau's mission throughout the State Department and the interagency, strengthen the programs and processes administered by the Bureau – particularly with respect to developing results-based management tools for evaluation of our programmatic efforts – and collaborate with the array of national security partners both here and abroad to ensure that counterterrorism remains at the forefront of our global concerns.

Consistent with the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) finalized in 2011, the Counterterrorism Bureau has honed in on two key strategic areas: 1) capacity building, so that countries can do a better job themselves of dealing with the threats within their own borders and regions, and 2) strengthening our work in countering violent extremism – otherwise known as CVE – to reduce the number of recruits to terrorist groups and counter the messaging these groups use to appeal to a wider audience. The latter effort is particularly important – with al-Qa'ida and its affiliates depending upon a steady flow of new recruits, we need to use all of the tools of national power to confront the murderous ideology that continues to incite violence around the world and combat the public messaging used by these groups, even as we maintain continuous pressure against their operational activities. If confirmed, I will take this up as a priority.

To achieve our goals, the Bureau has worked bilaterally and multilaterally to strengthen the foreign partnerships vital to our counterterrorism success. And we have created programs to empower at-risk communities across the world to push back against violent extremism.

If confirmed, I am committed to continuing to strengthen these partnerships with our traditional allies and others abroad, including with the overwhelming majority of the world's nations who share with us an understanding of the terrorist threat and the need to address it in ways that match the ever-changing methodologies used by terrorists as technology and globalization evolve over time.

As a good example of this kind of international partnership, I would emphasize one successful initiative in particular: the CT Bureau's signature achievement from the first term of the Obama Administration, the establishment of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF). The State Department, together with a core group of foreign partners, launched the GCTF in 2011 to ensure that the necessary international architecture was in place to advance a more strategic approach to addressing 21st century terrorism. In partnership with 28 countries across the globe and the European Union, the Forum seeks to enhance our efforts to strengthen civilian institutions and counter violent extremism. In a relatively short time, the GCTF has made its mark, having already mobilized more than \$230 million in member funds and set in motion two international training centers to provide platforms for sustainable training on countering violent extremism and strengthening rule-of-law institutions. And in September, Secretary Kerry announced that a core group of government and non-governmental partners from different regions will establish the first-ever public-private global fund to support local grass-roots efforts to counter violent extremism.

So, while the people of the Middle East, West Africa and the Horn of Africa, and South and Central Asia will each determine the best way to move forward based on their particular history, culture, and institutions, we can and will provide vital advice and assistance to civilian institutions, with a particular focus on countries transitioning to a long term, rule of law-based framework. Many of these countries are asking for our help, and if confirmed, I will do all I can to ensure we are prepared, within the limits of our resources and with our key partners' financial and political support, to encourage that effort.

I believe we must also continue to strengthen and leverage the full unity of effort on counterterrorism within our own government, working together with our colleagues at the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Treasury, Justice and the intelligence community.

Evolving terrorist threats require innovative strategies, creative diplomacy, and even stronger partnerships. Building partner capacity, countering violent extremism, and engaging partners bilaterally and multilaterally are essential. We learned in Afghanistan, for example, that stability requires progress on both security and political goals, and must be matched by effective governance, as well as the advancement of rule of law, human rights, and economic progress. This is why, notably, our assistance programs through the upcoming transition in Afghanistan are focused on building the capacity of Afghan institutions to sustain the gains of the last decade.

As I noted, we have come a distance, but we have appreciably farther to go. As we move forward, the United States must continue to use all of the tools at our disposal – diplomacy, development, economic statecraft, military, law enforcement, and intelligence tools – to disrupt and diminish the terrorist threat, and do so strategically and with appropriate forethought and consideration.

I look forward to working with you and the Committee to make that happen and to contribute to the security of the American people.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to your questions.